

Message Text

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ACTION EA-06

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R 060158Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3256
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUALA LUMPUR 2748

LIMDIS

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, ASEAN, JA, MY, US
SUBJECT: JAPANESE POLICY PLANNING OFFICER VISITS KUALA LUMPUR

REF: KUALA LUMPUR 0531

1. SUMMARY: A JAPANESE MFA POLICY PLANNING OFFICIAL
INTERESTED IN POLITICO-MILITARY AFFAIRS VISITED
KUALA LUMPUR IN THE COURSE OF HIS TRAVEL TO SEVERAL
ASEAN CAPITALS TO OBTAIN A READING OF LOCAL ATTITUDES
ON REGIONAL SECURITY. DURING A CONVERSATION AT
THIS EMBASSY THE OFFICIAL SOUGHT OUR VIEWS ON GOM
PRECEPTIONS, INCLUDING HOW GOM MIGHT VIEW A MORE
ACTIVE JAPANESE MILITARY ROLE IN THE EAST ASIAN
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REGION. END SUMMARY.

2. MR. G. KANO, RESEARCH AND PLANNING DEPT.,
POLICY PLANNING DIVISION, MFA, TOKYO, CALLED ON
POL CHIEF APRIL 3 TO ELICIT EMBASSY VIEWS ON
REGIONAL POLITICO-MILITARY SITUATION. KANO,
ACCOMPANIED BY A JAPANESE EMBASSY POLITICAL OFFICER,

NOTED THAT HIS BACKGROUND WAS EUROPE-ORIENTED, THAT HE HAD JUST JOINED POLICY PLANNING IN JANUARY, AND THAT THE BASIC PURPOSE OF HIS VISIT WAS PERSONAL ORIENTATION TO SOUTH-EAST ASIA. HE ADDED HOWEVER THAT WHILE HE WOULD BE VISITING THE FOUR OTHER ASEAN CAPITALS ONE OF HIS COLLEAGUES WOULD BE VISITING MANILA, IMPLYING THEREFORE THAT HIS TRAVELS WERE PART OF A MORE FORMAL JAPANESE SAMPLING TO SOUTHEAST ASIAN ATTITUDES.

3. IN RESPONSE TO KANO'S QUERY RE OUR ASSESSMENT OF THE PREVAILING SITUATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, POL CHIEF REPLIED THAT WE HAD A GENERALLY UPBEAT VIEW, CITING INTER ALIA GROWING REGIONAL COOPERATION UNDER ASEAN AEGIS AS WELL AS STEPS TOWARD NORMALIZATION OF BILATERAL RELATIONS BETWEEN INDOCHINESE COMMUNIST STATES AND THEIR NON-COMMUNIST NEIGHBORS.

4. KANO WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN OUR IMPRESSIONS OF MALAYSIAN ATTITUDES TOWARD JAPANESE ROLE IN THE REGION, INCLUDING HOW GOM MIGHT REGARD A POSSIBLE INCREASED ROLE OF JAPANESE SELF-DEFENSE FORCES IN CONTRIBUTING TO MAINTENANCE OF EAST ASIAN MILITARY BALANCE. IN RESPONSE, CONFIDENTIAL

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POL CHIEF CITED GOM ATTITUDES ON REGIONAL PEACE AND STABILITY AS ENUNCIATED DURING CODEL WOLFF VISIT IN JANUARY (REFTEL), NOTING THAT WHILE MALAYSIANS DID NOT RPT NOT SEEM TO WANT A WITHDRAWAL OF US MILITARY INFLUENCE THAT MIGHT DESTABILIZE THE CURRENT EQUILIBRIUM, THEIR LONG TERM PREFERENCE NONETHELESS IS TO INSULATE THE REGION FROM GREAT POWER RIVALRY. THUS THEY PREFER INCREASED US ECONOMIC AND "DIPLOMATIC", RATHER THAN MILITARY, INVOLVEMENT IN THE REGION. SIMILARLY, WHILE WE CANNOT SPEAK FOR THE GOM ON THIS, WE SUSPECT THE MALAYSIANS SEE JAPAN'S CONTRIBUTION TO REGIONAL STABILITY IN TERMS OF JAPAN'S ROLE AS AN ECONOMIC SUPERPOWER AND MAJOR TRADE, AID AND INVESTMENT PARTNER, RATHER THAN IN TERMS OF A POSSIBLE JAPANESE MILITARY ROLE IN THE REGION.

5. KANO ALSO ASKED WHICH COUNTRY IN ASEAN MALAYSIANS BELIEVED FACED GRAVEST SECURITY THREATS, POL CHIEF REPLIED THAT GOM OFFICIALS IN PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS HAD EXPRESSED CONCERN

ABOUT THAILAND'S SECURITY AND URGED US TO BE AS FORTHCOMING AS POSSIBLE IN RESPONDING TO RTG'S MILITARY PROCUREMENT REQUESTS.

6. COMMENT: KANO IS VERY PERSONABLE AND HAS AN IMPRESSIVE COMMAND OF ENGLISH, PERHAPS OWING TO A PREVIOUS POSTING TO LONDON. THROUGHOUT THE CONVERSATION HE LISTENED CAREFULLY BUT DID NOT VOLUNTEER HIS OWN VIEWS. HE HAS ALREADY VISITED SINGAPORE AND BANGKOK AND LEFT KUALA LUMPUR ENROUTE TO JAKARTA YESTERDAY (APRIL 4). AT OUR SUGGESTION KANO MAY BE GETTING IN TOUCH WITH SOMEONE IN THE POLITICAL SECTION IN EMBASSY TOKYO TO SHARE SOME OF HIS FINDINGS, FAILING
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WHICH EMBASSY MIGHT WISH TO CONTACT HIM DIRECTLY.
MILLER

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NNN

Message Attributes

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